DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 034 495 HE 001 241

TITLE	The Role of the University in the Community. III.
INSTITUTION	Governmental Research Inst., Inc., Lincoln, Neb.
PUB DATE	Jun 69
NOTE	5p.
JOURNAL CIT	Governmental Research Institute Bulletin; v22 n17 Jun 69
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$0.35
DESCRIPTORS	*Action Programs (Community), Community Service Programs, *Higher Education, *Institutional Role, School Community Cooperation, *School Community Relationship, Social Problems, State Programs, State Universities, *Urban Universities
IDENTIFIERS	*Nebraska University

ABSTRACT

This is the last in a series of 3 bulletins dealing with university-community relationships. The first bulletin examined the role of the university in contemporary American life and cited some innovative programs in university-community cooperation. The second bulletin discussed some of the areas in which cooperation exists between the University of Nebraska and the city of Lincoln and pointed out some problem areas in university-local government relations. This bulletin deals with the response of the University of Nebraska to urban problems within the state. The information was obtained from responses to letters of inquiry sent to several universities and national organizations. Much of this report describes the Center for Urban Affairs at Omaha. The scope of the Center's effort includes community service, education and teaching, and basic and applied research. Specific activities in each of these areas are listed. In addition to the Center, other activities of the University are described. The Industrial Research and Information Service was established to assist industry in growth and development. The Institute of Computational Science has provided technical assistance in many local, state, and national government projects. The Human Resources Research Foundation, in addition to its research functions, has been involved in several community service projects. (DS)

ED034495

GRI Bulletin

GOVERNMENTAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE, INC.
(Formerly the Local Committee of 1000)
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"A man's judgment is no better than his information"

Vol. 22 June, 1969 No. 17

THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY IN THE COMMUNITY--III

This is the last in a series of three bulletins on the role of the university in the community. The first bulletin examined the role of the university in contemporary American life and described some innovative programs of university-community cooperation. The second in the series dealt with relationships between the University of Nebraska and the City of Lincoln. This bulletin will discuss some aspects of the response of the University of Nebraska to economic and social change within the state emphasizing especially the University's response to the urban crisis.

In the first bulletin we discussed what seems to be a growing concern on many university campuses about the responsibility and potential of the university in helping to solve the crisis in the cities. We described a few of the many programs of an innovative nature including the Tulsa Professors of the City program, the University of North Carolina's Institute for Excellence in State Government and the University of West Virginia's Internship Program.

In addition to embarking on specific programs in this area, some universities are developing experimental structures to heighten the level of university-community partnership.

In the second bulletin, in discussing the relationship between the University of Nebraska and the City of Lincoln, we noted the concern of some administrators of both governmental units with the lack of a structure for cooperation. In Nebraska such a structure could be informal or it probably could be legal and formal through the use of the Interlocal Cooperation Act of 1963.[1] Some universities are evolving structures for community involvement on their own.

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[1] Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, 1943, Ch. 23, Sec. 2203.

***The Voice of the Young Citizen award was won this year by Lincoln Southeast High School.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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The Council on University Relations

The Council on University Relations in Chicago concerns itself with the relationship of the University of Illinois to the Metropolitan Area. Initially the Council tried to discover the attitudes leaders of various groups had about the University and its responsibilities in an urban setting. Leaders of the Chicago Transit Authority, the Chicago Association of Commerce and Industry, major industrial firms, the black community, the arts, and the communications media were invited to present their ideas to the Council. Although the Council is not an action organization, its 1969 program includes: (1) organization and uses of University alumni in the metropolitan area; (2) relationships of the University to the City in the fields of art, architecture, and the performing arts; (3) the University and Chicago's public schools; and (4) development activities of the University in the Chicago area.

The development of the Council is yet another example of a trend indicating a willingness on the part of the universities to become involved in helping to find solutions for the problems of the urban communities of which they are a part.

University of Nebraska Center for Urban Affairs

One of the pioneering efforts in university-related urban programs was the founding of the Urban Studies Center at the Municipal University of Omaha in 1963. The Urban Studies Center was the result of a response to three needs: (1) the need for basic information about Omaha as expressed by business, political, and governmental leaders and university spokesmen; (2) the University's need for an urban research "laboratory"--the city; and (3) the need to redefine the purpose and relevancy of higher education in light of the crisis of urban America.

In the spring of 1968, after the University merger, the chancellor of the University of Nebraska appointed an ad hoc committee on urban studies. The committee was comprised of the President, Dean of the College of Education, and the Director of the Urban Studies Center at the University of Nebraska in Omaha; the President of the University of Nebraska Medical Center and the Dean of the College of Medicine; and the President, Chairman of the Department of Sociology, and the Director of the Graduate School of Social Work at the University of Nebraska, Lincoln Campus.

In November, 1968, members of this committee visited the Urban Studies Centers at Harvard-MIT, Boston University, and the State University of New Jersey-Rutgers. The committee also visited the Urban Coalition in Washington, D.C. and the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare.

The initial effort of the Urban Studies Center and the work of the chancellor's urban studies committee resulted in the establishment of the Center for Urban Affairs which will serve not only Omaha but other urban centers of the state as needs arise and resources become available.

The scope of the effort of the Center includes: (1) community services, (2) education and teaching, and (3) basic and applied research. Community services includes the following:

1. Utilizing University and community talent to provide services to public and private agencies in the field of urban affairs.

2. Sponsoring workshops, conferences, and seminars on law, planning, health, education, and other topics as they relate to urban life.

a patient at Orthopedic Hospital. The student visits the patient each week in an effort to establish friendship and to help the patient to develop his potentiality.

2. Uni-Link--This is a program based on a one-to-one relationship between a student and a young person under the supervision of the juvenile court.

3. Potentiality Development Project--A University student works with a disadvantaged young person who has the academic potential to do college work. The student tries to motivate the young person and helps him to find ways of realizing his potential.

4. High School Equivalency Programs--Migrant and farm labor youth from all over the United States are brought to the University where they live in dormitories with university students. The 50 migrant young people, who are high school dropout stays about 7 months and take specialized concentrated courses in reading, science, algebra, English usage, and modern life skills. Once again the effort is toward helping people to realize their potential utilizing good human relations skills.

Summary

We began this series by indicating that two contemporary problems: (1) campus unrest and (2) the crisis in the cities led us to consider the role of the university in the community. We have discovered that the university community is expressing its concern for the relevancy of higher education in solving the problems in our society in many kinds of experimental programs.

As former President Johnson said, in discussing the Higher Education Act of 1965:

> The role of the university must extend far beyond the ordinary extension type operation. Its research findings and talents must be made available to the community. Faculty must be called upon for consulting services. Pilot projects, seminars, conferences, TV programs, and task forces drawing on many departments of the university--all should be brought into play. This is a demanding assignment for the university and many are not ready for it. The time has come for us to help the university to face problems of the city as it once faced problems of the farm.

It behooves us to continue to consider the extent to which the university can and should use its talent and expertise in solving community problems, the relationship of the University to other public and private sectors of the community, and the role of the University in formulating public policy.

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The Director of the Center for Urban Affairs has indicated that the primary resource of the Center is the talent and expertise of University faculty. The task of the Center is to facilitate the use of that talent and expertise in helping to solve the problems of the growing urban centers in the state.[1]

Industrial Research and Information Service (IRIS)

In many kinds of programs the University of Nebraska has expressed its concern for the economic well-being not only of the cities, but of the entire state as well. One of the newer programs is the Industrial Research and Information Service whose basic purpose is "...to help industry in Nebraska find out about new processes, new materials, new products and new markets that will help them grow and prosper." The research capacity of the University is utilized to supply technical data to small industrial firms which do not have their own research staffs. Such data is supplied through conferences with faculty, short courses, seminars, workshops, and field service activities. In addition IRIS, which is a functional part of the State Department of Economic Development, works with the University of Nebraska College of Business Administration's Bureau of Business Research, Northern Natural Gas Company, Omaha Public Power District, and Consumers Public Power to gather and analyze information to determine the current and future needs of business and industry in the state.[2]

The University of Nebraska's Institute of Computational Science

The Institute of Computational Science has for some time been involved in a number of projects jointly undertaken with local, state, and federal government. A Law Information Retrieval System, developed in 1964, is used by both legislators and legal researchers. The Institute has acted in both a consulting and production capacity for a committee from the Governor's Crime Commission by producing relevant statistics concerning the law enforcement community in our state. It has also worked with the Nebraska Safety Patrol in an advisory capacity concerning the patrol's plans in the field of automation. The US Department of Agriculture has sponsored many computer projects through the Institute and continues to utilize the Institute's staff in developing many programs concerned with food growth patterns in the Midwest. The agricultural statistics sector of the State Department of Agriculture is also using both the staff and facilities of the Institute to develop efficient and useful statistical programs.[3]

The professional and academic staff of the Institute includes engineers, psychologists, statisticians, accountants, computing scientists systems analysts, and programmers who work as a team in solving complex problems. The Institute is being used at about 60% of capacity and has great potential for solving community problems.

The Nebraska Human Resources Research Foundation

The Research Foundation is a private organization based on the University campus which uses University facilities, graduate students in research programs, and faculty personnel as supervisors. It bases its work on the hypothesis that the greatest resource is the human resource. The Foundation tests postulates through research and observation and is, in addition, involved in many community service projects. Among them are the following:

1. The Orthopedic Project--In this project a university student relates to

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[1] Personal Interview with Dr. Wayne Wheeler, Director, Center for Urban Affairs, February 25, 1969.

[2] "New Services Available for Nebraska Business and Industry," Nebraska Alumnus, November, 1967, pp. 12-13.

[3] Personal Interview with Dr. Donald F. Costello, Assistant Director, University of Nebraska Institute of Computational Science, June 11, 1969.

3. Establishing and maintaining a data bank of information on urban affairs.

4. Developing demonstration or experimental projects.

5. Public education.

The education-teaching phase of the Center's work includes:

1. Research opportunities, field work experiences, and internships for students.

2. In-service training in urban affairs for faculty.

3. Strengthening the undergraduate major in urban studies.

4. Studying the feasibility of a graduate program in urban studies.

The research component of the Center's activity includes basic research and the following applied research:

1. Developing information for the community, upon request, on such topics as transportation, housing, health, business mergers, pollution, trade and service area definitions, etc.

2. Organizing and sponsoring projects designed to demonstrate the feasibility of one alternative or others in solving problems.

3. Gathering data relative to present community programs, making evaluations, and helping to plan for future community development.

In each of the three areas several projects have been successfully undertaken. For example, the University of Nebraska at Omaha and Creighton University have developed an inter-university task force which has devoted its energies to the problem of attempting to develop better communication across racial lines. The College of Education has several programs operating from an off-campus unit on Omaha's near northside. Projects include a federally financed program to train teachers for disadvantaged areas, the Veterans in Public Service Program which trains veterans to work in disadvantaged areas, and the VIP (very important person) program to help teachers who are teaching in disadvantaged neighborhoods to upgrade their effectiveness. The Center also utilizes the off-campus building as a field station for neighborhood research.

In a recent report to the Board of Regents, the chancellor's ad hoc committee made the following recommendation relative to the future of the Center of Urban Affairs:

> The Center for Urban Affairs and its program, while located on the University of Nebraska at Omaha campus and administered as a part of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, is defined as an operation and interest of the total University system. It seeks to attract interest in and stimulate the urban activities of persons from all parts of the University and to aid in the cooperation and coordination of these services, studies, and other educational activities.[1]

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[1] "Report of Chancellor's Ad Hoc Committee on Urban Studies," February, 1969.